

Australasian SPARTACIST



NUMBER ELEVEN

AUGUST 1974

TEN CENTS

As recession looms . . .

Struggle mounts in metal industry

The world capitalist economy is clearly entering a recession, and so is Australia. Although the actual general economic slump has only recently begun, the conditions for it have been apparent at least since late 1973. The declining stock markets, credit squeeze, and increased number of business failures, coupled with accelerating inflation, common to all developed capitalist countries, are sure signs of a capitalist economic crisis -- a decline in production as capitalists either face collapse or refuse to invest because of "inadequate" rates of profit.

A temporary boom has permitted compromises in the class struggle in Australia, which enabled the labour movement to force some concessions from the bosses (in spite of the sabotage of the trade-union bureaucracy, wages have so far lagged only slightly behind prices), and postponed a conflict between the working class and the Labor Government. But the boom is now over. With militancy still strong and the prospect of mass unemployment and continuing inflation, sharp confrontations with the employers are in the offing, exceeding even the level of struggle of this year's near-record strike wave.

In these battles it is the misleadership of the agents of capital within the workers movement -- the trade-union bureaucrats and the Labor Party reformists -- which is the greatest danger to the working class. Their job is to deflect mass dissatisfaction from overstepping bounds compatible with the preservation of capitalism by betrayals hidden behind militant rhetoric or token reforms.

A major clash looms in the key metal industry, where a campaign to reopen the award covering 400,000 workers and affecting 200,000 more through flow-ons has begun. When the current metal award was bureaucratically rammed through mass meetings in April, it allowed for only a \$15 flat increase in the basic wage, an extra week's annual leave, and little else. We pointed out at the time,

"\$15 does not come close to meeting the rise in prices since the last award was negotiated.... In the current inflationary situation, even when possible over-award gains in the next few months are taken into account, the majority of metal workers will, by next year, be even worse off than they were before this \$15 rise." (*ASp*, May 1974)

This was completely proven by the announcement on July 20 that inflation has risen to an annual rate of 16.4 percent, the highest since the Korean war, with widespread predictions that it will be as much as 20 percent by the end of the year. All of the bureaucrats in the metal industry unions consciously sabotaged any real struggle for an adequate wage gain in the last campaign. Now they desperately hope that no one will remember when they said that the \$15 was a "substantial" gain -- as did AMWU Assistant Commonwealth Secretary Laurie Carmichael of the so-called Communist Party of Australia (*Tribune*, 16-22 April 1974)!

One of the reasons given by Jack Devereux, president of the Metal Trades Federation of Unions (MTF), for reopening the award was that "wage increases in other fields far exceeded their last increase" (*The Australian*, 23 July 1974). Quite true -- but this was already clear in April when miners won a \$25 rise, Waterside Workers \$22.50, and in the case of the conservative Vehicle Builders union (VBEF) up to \$30 without even a strike! This proved that the metal unions had the strength to win much more -- and not only in wages, but the wide range of demands raised in the last log of claims. Now, with the economy entering a recession and the growing unemployment, the resistance of the employers has stiffened and the positions of the unions weakened. It is all the more inadequate and treacherous to respond with a demand for a wage rise which does not go beyond the \$30 in the original claim, and to have no program whatsoever for fighting unemployment, which hits young, women and migrant workers hardest, and the effects of inflation. That fight requires stronger measures: a shorter work week with no reduction in weekly pay; industrial action to stop sackings; a real automatic cost-of-living adjustment; and in the event of factory closings, taking them out of the hands of the capi-

talists with a demand for their immediate nationalisation without compensation, to be run under workers' control. Yet the MTF Executive has not bothered to raise a single demand other than the \$15!

The move to reopen the award came on the initiative of right-wing Laurie Short, Secretary of the Federated Ironworkers Association (FIA) catching bureaucrats such as Jack Devereux and Communist Party of Australia (CPA) members John Halfpenny and Laurie Carmichael with their left cover down. Dissatisfaction over inflation in the ranks of the FIA is the main reason for the move by Short, who faces an organised, militant reformist opposition in the FIA, particularly in Wollongong.

So far, however, there has actually been no campaign at all! No meetings of the rank and



Laurie Carmichael (left) and Jack Devereux -- backhanded support to protectionism. (photo: AMWU Monthly Journal)

file are scheduled until early August. The Executive's meeting on July 9 decided on the \$15 figure without even trying to consult with the unions' membership, and no decision on any industrial action was made. At a NSW delegates' and shop stewards' meeting in Sydney on July 15, only 200 of the 6000 shops covered by the MTF in NSW were represented -- a very small turnout. This resulted from the bureaucrats' failure to mobilise for it -- which in at least one case they

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Wellington, June 10 -- 900 workers protest inflation, wage freeze, injunctions.

NZ Labour Government attacks strike wave

The New Zealand working class has responded to rising prices and a wage freeze imposed by the Labour Government with a higher level of class struggle than seen there for many years. A general strike was narrowly averted by the labour bureaucrats on July 5, but they have not prevented the growth of resistance to the blatantly capitalist policies of the utterly servile Kirk government.

From a landslide victory in 1972, the Labour Government has proceeded to fritter away its authority among the workers by introducing, with the total cooperation of the Federation of Labour (FOL) (New Zealand counterpart of the ACTU), a wage freeze in August 1973 (renewed in April) with the inflation rate up to about 15 percent (*The Paper*, June 1974), and by adopting an anti-union stance in response to working-class militancy. The sharemarket plunge in June indicates the uncertainty, shared by capitalists internationally, of

achieving a sufficient profit rate, and they have exerted increasing pressure on Kirk to crack down on strikes.

While there have been a series of incidents indicating a rising level of militancy, it was the arrest on July 1 of Bill Andersen, secretary of the Northern Drivers Union and President of the Socialist Unity Party (SUP) (pro-Moscow), which brought NZ to the verge of a general strike. His union had defied a court injunction demanding that it lift a ban on fuel deliveries to an Auckland ferry company involved in a dispute with the Seamen's Union. The reaction of the unions -- in many cases with the rank and file walking off spontaneously, forcing the hand of the union officialdom -- was not centred on the jailing of Andersen but on the court injunction, which they correctly saw as a blow against the right to strike.

A large section of Auckland industry was halted, and drivers, rubbish collectors, seamen, paper workers and boilermakers all stopped work. The Canterbury Trades Council called a 24-hour stoppage and more than 20,000 workers in the Wellington/Hutt region were involved, despite Andersen's release and appeals from Kirk. Altogether, it was estimated that 50,000 workers were

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SWL/CL co-thinkers fall out in USA— "United" Secretariat splits again

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP), American "sympathisers" of the Pabloist "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec), ended three years of internal struggle with the expulsion of 115 supporters of the minority Internationalist Tendency (IT) on American Independence Day. This abrupt act in the US portends an open international rupture in the USec between the SWP-led Minority and the International Majority Tendency (IMT) led by Ernest Mandel which the IT supports.

The IT's democratic rights were continually suppressed within the SWP. But it stood by while the Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency supporter Gerald Clark was framed up and expelled and all appeal ignored.

For the past five years the USec has polarised ever more sharply between the fake orthodoxy of the reformist, legalist Minority represented in Australia by the SWL and the impressionistic revisionism of the centrist, adventurist IMT adhered to by the CL. The SWL and CL, whose split in 1972 resulted from the same polarisation and who sought to pass off as Leninist internationalism their coexistence as two hostile "sympathising groups" within the USec's federated bloc, must now face the stark reality of its coming unstuck. ■

Fake Trotskyists "fight" CPA

The fake Trotskyists in Australia are virtually all united in proclaiming the continuing Stalinism of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). This is no accident, for all of them have trouble distinguishing themselves from the CPA, or suffer from a fear of capitulation to it. The dogmatic assertion of the CPA's Stalinism is a convenient way of maintaining distance, avoiding struggle or hiding embarrassing similarities with the CPA.

The Healyite Socialist Labour League (SLL) clings most stubbornly to the theory that the CPA is Stalinist. In the article "Behind the trendy cover Stalinism remains", *Workers News* (4 July 1974) argues that "Since the 1920s the theory and practice of the CPA has been based on the Stalinist theory of 'socialism in one country' and its corollaries 'peaceful coexistence' and the 'peaceful road to socialism'". This is nothing more than idealism: the CPA's original sin gave it an indelible "Stalinist Nature", no matter how it has changed since. This pseudo-Marxist "pre-determination" theory is typical of the SLL's thoroughly undialectical method.

Salvatore Allende believed in "socialism in one country", "peaceful coexistence" and the "peaceful road to socialism". But was Allende therefore a Stalinist? Hardly. Stalinism as an ideology is only a variant of Menshevism; but what is peculiar to it is recognition of and subordination to the ruling caste in some deformed workers state, which then forms the central just-

ification for the rest of the betrayals of Stalinists. Precisely this element of CPA ideology was destroyed in the fight resulting from Aarons' desire for a more successful Australian reformist role, and the Aaronsite CPA has now thrown up a confused reformist, eclectic ideology of its own to take the place of Stalinism.

The SLL also argues that the CPA is still Stalinist because it still covers for ALP reformism and still betrays the working class. But these things are scarcely unique to Stalinism. Implicit in the SLL's position is that Stalinism is somehow more fundamentally evil than other forms of reformism. This is *Stalinophobia*, and its logic leads to *capitulation to non-Stalinist reformism*. And so we find the SLL calling on the working class to force Whitlam to the left.

The Pabloist Socialist Workers League (SWL) has recently reversed without explanation its previous view that the CPA was "one of the least Stalinised and most advanced" CPs in the world. David Holmes in *Direct Action* (8 June 1974) now argues a view similar to the SLL's that remnants of Stalinist ideology in the CPA prove there has been no real "break from Stalinism". Holmes *deliberately ignores* those aspects of the CPA's current policies which have developed mostly since the last split and which are *virtually identical to those of the SWL*, and must strain to find disagreements. Doesn't the CPA support the "independent women's movement", the "independent gay liberation movement", etc? It is arguable that it is the CPA and not the SWL which is the "best builder" of these "mass movements" for petty-bourgeois reformism.

At the moment the CPA remains stagnant, but it would be foolish to write it off. Under appropriate conditions, it may be able to head off a wave of working-class militancy much better because of its "independence" than the rigidly pro-Moscow Socialist Party of Australia and thus, having "broken" with Stalinism, play an even more treacherous role than the Stalinists. The political exposure of the CPA remains an important task along the road to the construction of a revolutionary party; and the fake orthodoxy of the SLL/SWL is only an abdication of that task. ■

Maoists raise southern cross, burn hammer and sickle

Liberals and Maoists celebrated July 4, American Independence Day, in Melbourne this year with a worse than usual display of impotent Australian nationalism. Casting aside any pretense of communism, the Maoists traded in their red flags for the symbol of petty-bourgeois Australian nationalism -- the Eureka flag. Most egregious was their burning of the Soviet flag along with the American in an attempt to equate the Soviet workers state with US imperialism -- a disgusting and obscene attack upon the historic conquests of the October Revolution. Those conquests, the collectivised property forms, still exist, but are now deformed by the same type of bureaucratic caste which governs China; and in both countries they must be defended against the imperialists who would love to destroy them.

Very much at home in the nationalist orgy was ALP Senator Brown, who repeated his attacks on US ambassador Marshall Green. He warned of "attempts to destroy democratic government in Australia" which, taken in the spirit of his statement that Whitlam is "one of the greatest leaders Australia has ever had" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 July 1974) places Brown and his "left" ALP supporters squarely as defenders of capitalism and the *bourgeois-democratic* state apparatus. US imperialism and its agents and servants, the CIA and multinationals, *together with* the junior imperialism of the Australian bourgeoisie, can only be destroyed by a proletarian revolution in the US and Australia. The task of upholding a genuine internationalist perspective was left to the Spartacist League, which marched in the demonstration under the banner, "Smash Capitalist Imperialism through Workers Revolution". ■

CL retreat from rotten bloc?

Last month, we attacked the rotten bloc between the Communist League (CL) and the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) in establishing the Sydney Smash Act Committee (SAC) to organise a campaign against the racist Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Act. In the persons of Denis Freney (CPA) and Ros Harrison (CL), they

insisted that all participants in SAC support their calls for black community control and self-determination (see *ASP* no 10, July 1974). But at a special meeting of the SAC, held following an SAC-sponsored demonstration on July 12 at the Queensland Tourist Bureau in Sydney, the CL (in Freney's absence) reversed its position. On the motion of CLer John McCarthy, the basis of SAC was reduced to opposition to the Queensland Act and the current repressive campaign of Bjelke-Petersen.

The SL participated in the demonstration, called to oppose the Act, in line with our principled commitment to united action against all oppression of blacks, even though the false and dangerously utopian program of SAC made it impossible for us to join it. The SL contingent of seven (out of about 25) raised the slogans "Repeal the Act, Stop Police repression -- Equal rights for blacks", and "Not black separatism, but a multi-racial vanguard party -- For a united workers revolution". In contrast, the CL raised only democratic slogans, and McCarthy declared that the CL decided to carry only the slogans agreed to by SAC, making the CL's contingent programmatically indistinguishable from the Australia Party.

At the meeting which followed, the CL was unable to defend their rotten bloc with the CPA, and simply tried to ignore the previous SAC decision and their support for it. We can only welcome the CL's flip-flop, however dishonest, as a step forward in the effort to get rid of the racist, repressive Act. But the CL's opportunist, unprincipled zig-zags, both in the initial bloc with Freney and in their later liquidation of even their own program, prove their leadership of any struggle will only deflect it from a revolutionary course. ■

Spartacists expose revisionists in LaTrobe elections

The student elections held on July 4-5 at LaTrobe University in Melbourne presented a wide range of political views. A coalition of Maoists and various "progressives", including four feminists, running under the banner of the "Progressive Left" (PL) were the winners. Four candidates of the DLP-right were narrowly defeated and three left-wing candidates were at the bottom of the list. Among these was Pip Naughten, candidate of the Spartacist Club at LaTrobe, who received 250 votes. Naughten's campaign was the only one to offer any kind of political alternative to the personalist, campus parochial approach of the "Progressive Left". The other candidates to the left of the PL, Phil Ilton of the Socialist Workers Action Group-sponsored "Revolutionary Communists" and Laszlo Harmathy, running as an anarchist were notable in that they stood on no program. Ilton, in typical left social-democratic fashion tried to tail everyone but managed to gain only 258 votes, and Harmathy, whose anarchism had something of a spurious character, collected 255.

Although Maoism is the dominant political tendency at LaTrobe there were no candidates standing from the Maoist Revolutionary Student Movement. But the candidates of the PL largely reflected Maoist politics. Most prominent was Lynda Heims, who preaches the Maoist line of Australian nationalism and unity with the Australian bourgeoisie. Another candidate, Annette Tevlin, who stood on the PL ticket in order "to promote the ideas embodied in the F7 movement" (F7 is a small syndicalist, workerist group) wanted to "build a realistic relationship between students and workers to bring about radical social change." The four feminists campaigned solely for women's studies and "child care centres for everyone" in the "long term".

The Spartacist Club, in a leaflet issued 4 July, explained why we could not as bolsheviks critically support the fake-lefts such as Ilton outside the PL menagerie:

"Phil Ilton is simply not standing on *any* program!... The nearest Ilton gets to saying what he supports is when he calls for votes for the F7, feminist and Spartacist candidates. Presumably he like petty-bourgeois workerism, bourgeois feminism, and revolution!"

The Spartacist campaign opposed both the status quo and the reformist, campus-parochial orientation of the rest of the "left". It called for student-teacher-worker control of the universities, an end to the degree system, and open admissions with adequate living stipends for all. Transcending a narrow campus outlook by tying its campaign to the struggle against capitalism, it advocated equal pay for equal work; 30 hours work for 40 hours pay; the construction of class-struggle caucuses in the unions to dump the reformist union bureaucrats; and for the expropriation of industry under workers' control without compensation carried out by a workers government. ■

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

a monthly organ of revolutionary Marxism for the rebirth of the Fourth International published by the Central Committee of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand

EDITORIAL BOARD: Bill Logan (chairman)
David Reynolds (managing)
David Scott (labour)
John Sheridan (production and circulation)
Aaire Hannah
Joel Salinger (Victoria)

GPO Box 3473,
Sydney,
NSW, 2001.

GPO Box 2339,
Melbourne,
Victoria, 3001.

Telephone 660-7647 Telephone 429-1597

SUBSCRIPTIONS: One dollar for the next twelve issues (one year). Fifteen dollars for libraries and institutions.

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST is registered at the GPO, Sydney for posting as a newspaper -- Category C.

Oppose Zionist expansionism

Israeli Trotskyists call for Hebrew/Arab workers' revolution

reprinted from Workers Vanguard, no 47, 21 June 1974

Editors' note: The following is a leaflet distributed by the Spartacist nucleus in Israel at a June 5 demonstration in Jerusalem protesting the Zionist occupation of Arab territories in the 1967 war.

As every year since the 1967 War the left groups are holding a demonstration against the occupation [of Arab territories]. But this year the demonstration is taking place against the background of a governmental crisis, already several months old, the results of the recent [October] war and the efforts to arrange an imperialist deal.

The last elections for the Knesset, which took place in December 1973, proved that the Ma'arakh [the coalition of the Zionist "labor" parties] has been weakened -- receiving only 54 representatives (in the previous elections they received 56) -- and the strength of the Gahal [the rightist Zionist bloc headed by Menachim Begin] increased. This vote reflected a lack of confidence in the government, which was seen as inefficient in organizing the war. The governmental crisis is occurring under pressure from American imperialism to retreat from the Sinai and from the Syrian Heights.

The usual partner of the Ma'arakh for its coalition governments, the Mafdal [the National Religious Party], prefers not to participate in the new Rabin government but rather to set up a "wall-to-wall" coalition with the Likud [a rightist bloc which includes the Gahal]. As in 1956, under the pressure of American imperialism to retreat from the "Third Israeli Kingdom" (Ben Gurion's expression), the present line of division between the different wings of Zionism runs between those who accept retreat under U.S. government pressure (to be sure, giving up as little territory as possible) -- the wing represented by Rabin and his possible partners in the next government, the Independent Liberals and the Civil Rights Movement (the liberal bourgeoisie) -- and those who oppose any kind of retreat, the Likud-Mafdal, who pin their hopes on the replacement of Nixon by the Meany/Jackson wing of the Democratic Party.

The terrorist action at Ma'alot, for which the DPFLP [Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine] took responsibility, was



Palestinian refugee camp.

the result of a desire to hit at the present imperialist deal, and that after Hawatmeh declaring three months ago his desire for a "peace" (i.e., capitulation to imperialism). This action pushed the Jewish masses into the arms of the Gahal and gave the Israeli government an excuse for its mass murder in the Palestinian camps of Lebanon.

As Leninists, the international Spartacist tendency of course opposes the imperialist deal and supports the right of self-determination for the Palestinian Arab nation. But a new reactionary war could not obtain the right of self-determination for the Palestinian Arab nation; only a proletarian revolution in the Near East under the leadership of a multi-national Bolshevik party [can accomplish this].

As Leninists we are prepared to give military support to the Palestinian masses, even when they are temporarily under petty-bourgeois leadership, if this leadership will undertake independent struggle against the Zionist state or the Hashemites, or the other Arab states. But we cannot defend in any way measures such as hijacking or murdering of children -- even when the Israeli government has a heavy responsibility in this matter as well, by refusing to exchange the political prisoners for the children. Not even the Israeli government's vicious mass murder in the Lebanese Palestinian camps can provide any retroactive justification for the terrorist action at Ma'alot.

The new situation, in which the Egyptian

bourgeoisie has become a serious competitor with Zionism as the keeper of imperialist order in the area, must lead to repercussions not only among the supporters of Rakah [the pro-Moscow Communist Party] who believed in the myth of a "non-capitalist road" in Egypt, but also among all militants of organizations such as Matzpen (Marxist), Matzpen (Tel Aviv) and Struggle, which consider themselves revolutionary while holding the oversimplified theory that the Zionists are the imperialist fortress in the area against the Arab nations. This theory is used to help them justify their support to the Arab bourgeoisie in the last war. Among all the left groups only Workers Alliance (Vanguard) correctly defined the character of the last war as a reactionary war on both sides. But this fact is explained as a result of being influenced by Zionist pressure instead of that of the Arab bourgeoisie. This was proved by its refusal to adopt the internationalist position of turning the reactionary war into a civil war, turning the Jewish workers against Zionism and the Arab workers against the Arab bourgeoisie. By this act [the Workers Alliance] proved to be part of the same camp of those who block the way of the working class to reach Marxism.

The new situation in the area, which has resulted in the growth of pacifist illusions on the one hand and the strengthening of the [rightist] bourgeois Gahal party in Israel on the other, has caused the left groups to oscillate between chasing after pacifist illusions and hysteria, seeing the danger of fascism everywhere. No matter to which side they are pushed, they are serving the Rakah and the petty-bourgeois leadership of the Palestinian and Jewish protest movements.

Rakah is connected with the Russian bureaucracy, which believes that "peaceful coexistence" is possible with imperialism, and has as its perspective support for the Zionist wing which agrees to go to the Geneva talks (Ma'arakh). It leads the anti-fascist hysteria, arguing that whoever opposes the imperialist deal is responsible for the fascist danger in Israel.

But Gahal is not a fascist party, and its strengthening is the reflection of the increasing hold of the Zionist bourgeoisie over the Zionist petty bourgeoisie. There is no fascist danger today in Israel. Fascism, a movement of petty-bourgeois despair, can appear only in a situation of social crisis, not merely a governmental crisis as now in Israel, in a situation in which the working class is advancing but blocked by its traitorous leadership. In such a situation, the petty bourgeoisie turns to fascism against the working class.

We need only recall that [Jewish Defense League leader Meir] Kahane's slate received only 0.8 percent in the elections to be convinced that there is no fascist danger in Israel. What is more, if there were a fascist danger, no wing of Zionism could stop it, only the independent mobilization of the working class, only the workers militias could play this role.

The Struggle group has since the war remained firm in its Stalinist politics by supporting the new imperialist re-division of Palestine as "a step forward." So also did Matzpen (Tel Aviv). The Matzpen (Marxist) group is connected with the revisionists of the United Secretariat, which for years has tailed after Nasserism and the petty-bourgeois guerrillaism. (Guerrilla war is certainly not the proletarian path.) With the appearance of the Jewish protest movement, under the leadership of Moti Ashkenazi and with the slogans of "Ministerial Responsibility" and "Removal of Those Responsible for the Failure," [Matzpen (Marxist)] jumped onto this bandwagon.

Tailing after the leadership of this petty-bourgeois movement, it published the shameful leaflet entitled "Moti, Be Careful," in which it spread illusions about the possible "progressive" character of the movement instead of struggling sharply against the protest movement leaders in order to bring potential militants into the revolutionary movement (which requires propagandizing the full revolutionary program). Why should any sane person join a grouplet like Matzpen if he can be a member of a mass "progressive" movement?

The political line which guides this group [Matzpen (Marxist)], expressed in its action proposal for the June 5 demonstration [against the occupation of Arab territories], is cooperation with the liberal bourgeoisie (Moked, Ha Olamhaze) utilizing the argument of the "fascist danger." This line is, of course, the line of the "anti-

fascist front," i.e., the popular front. The only reason why [Matzpen (Marxist)] does not already have support for or entry into a popular front on its record is the political situation in Israel and not its political line. It is a fact that it accepts the [Front Communiste Revolutionnaire] in France as a model, while the [FCR] supports the popular front of Mitterrand.

The Workers Alliance (Vanguard) is doing its part to spread pacifist illusions by publishing the leaflet "Let's Hear the Voice of the Youth for a Truly Just Peace Between Nations." This Stalinist formulation hides from the working



Al Fatah leader Yasir Arafat.

class the fact that peace is possible only after the working class takes power. In the center of its propaganda is the organization of a reformist labor party and a democratic constituent assembly as the solution to national oppression, an approach which is nothing but open Menshevism implying the possibility of a bourgeois solution to the national question.

Lately, it has jumped into the swamp of "Arab revolution" theories, the horse whose tail it is grabbing being Habash (PFLP) in contrast to Matzpen (Marxist) which was tailing Hawatmeh [DPFLP]. These two "Trotskyist" groups together are ready to spread any kind of illusion, but not to raise the central issue of the unification of the working class against the state power. Behind the pacifist illusions that the left (from Rakah to Vanguard) is spreading hides the danger of a new war that no kind of halfway measures, no kind of class collaboration will be able to avoid. Only the united struggle of the Arab and Jewish working class under the leadership of a multi-national proletarian vanguard party, which will take power in all the Near Eastern countries and which will build a Near Eastern socialist federation as a part of a socialist world, can put an end to the national oppression as well as break the bloody chain of reactionary wars.

Despite the reactionary nature of the Israeli state, it is clear that there exists a group with a common culture, common political economy and territorial concentration which fulfill the Marxist criteria for a nation. Recognizing the right of self-determination for the Hebrew-speaking Jewish nation (not all the Jews in the world) is necessary to any democratic solution of the national question.

The Palestinian nation must not pay the price of the tragedy of fascism in Europe, just as the Hebrew-speaking nation must not pay the price of the Zionist crimes. Two nations with

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Declaration for the Organizing of

1. The Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand and the Spartacist League of the United States declare themselves to be the nucleus for the early crystallization of an international Trotskyist tendency based upon the 1966 Declaration of Principles and dedicated to the rebirth of the Fourth International.

2. In a half dozen other countries parties, groups and committees have expressed their general or specific sympathy or support for the international Spartacist tendency, as have scattered supporters or sympathizers from a number of additional countries. Among these groups and individuals are comrades, in both Europe and Asia, possessing many years or even decades of experience as cadres of the Trotskyist movement.

3. The Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency, a small Marxist wing of the "United Secretariat," centered on the United States and with supporters in Australia and elsewhere, has seen its spokesmen expelled from their national sections and parties for seeking to express their views within the United Secretariat, that deeply factionally divided and unprincipled conglomeration of reformists and revisionists, latter-day Kautskys, Bukharins and Pablos. If the main contenders in the "United Secretariat" are united in their common and not-so-veiled class collaborationist appetites, they are deeply divided between the electoralism and placid neo-populism of, e.g., the American Socialist Workers Party and the guerrilla-terrorist enthusing of, e.g., the French ex-Ligue Communiste. These differences reflect far more the differing national milieus and resulting opportunist appetites than they do any questions of principle. The recently concluded "Tenth World Congress" of the United Secretariat refused to hear or even acknowledge the appeal of RIT comrades against their expulsion. The RIT forces are now making common cause with the Spartacist tendency. They are but a vanguard of those who will struggle out of the revisionist swamp and toward revolutionary Marxism. Already in France an oppositional Central Committee member of the former Ligue Communiste has broken from the Front Communiste Revolutionnaire (recently formed by *Rouge*) in solidarity with the views of the RIT.

4. In Germany senior elements from the centrist and now fragmented left split from the United Secretariat in 1969 are being won to the Spartacist tendency. They are regrouping around the publication *Kommunistische Korrespondenz*. In Germany three inextricable tasks are posed for Leninists: to programmatically win over subjectively revolutionary elements from among the thousands of young left social-democrats, centrists, revisionists and Maoists; to fuse together intellectual and proletarian elements, above all through the development and struggle of communist industrial fractions; to inwardly assimilate some thirty years of Marxist experience and analysis from which the long break in continuity has left the new generation of German revolutionary Marxists still partially isolated.

5. In Austria, Israel, Canada and elsewhere similar splits, followed by revolutionary regroupment and growth, are occurring. In Austria the initial nucleus came from youth of the United Secretariat section. The "Vanguard" group of Israel is the last still united section of the old "International Committee" which split in 1971 between the British Socialist Labour League's wing led by Gerry Healy (with which the American Workers League of Wohlforth is still united despite friction) and the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste led by Pierre Lambert which subsequently lost most of its international support -- i.e. with the Bolivian Partido Obrero Revolucionario of G. Lora and the Euro-

pean groupings around the Hungarian, Varga, both breaking away. If the "Vanguard" group amid this welter of disintegration is still unable to choose between the counterposed claims of Healy and Lambert, it did produce and promptly expel a principled and valiant counter-tendency to both. In Canada youth from the Revolutionary Marxist Group's Red Circles are being drawn to Trotskyism. Everywhere unprincipled formations are subjected to the hammer blows of sharpened capitalist crisis and upsurge in the class struggle.

6. In Ceylon where the historical consequences of Pabloist revisionism have been most fully revealed, only the Revolutionary Workers Party, led by the veteran Trotskyist, Edmund Samarakkody, has emerged with integrity from the welter of betrayals perpetrated by the old LSSP and which were aided and abetted by the United Secretariat, its unspeakable agent on the island, Bala Tampoe, and the craven Healyite "International Committee." The RWP has been compelled to seek to generalize the revolutionary Marxist program anew from Marxist class struggle principles.

7. The Spartacist tendency is now actively working for the immediate convening of an international conference to politically and geographically extend the tendency and to further formalize and consolidate it. The tendency organizing nucleus will seek to work in the closest collaboration with sympathizing groups, particularly in continuing and assuring a broadly-based and full written and verbal discussion process leading to this international conference.

In the pre-conference interim the tendency organizing nucleus assumes political and organizational responsibility for the prior international resolutions, declarations, open letters and agreements for common work of its present constituent groups. These documents notably include: "Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International," 14 June 1963; Statement to the 3rd Conference of the International Committee, 6 April 1966; Letter to the OCRPI and French OCI, 15 January 1973; Letter to Samarakkody, 27 October 1973; the historical analyses: "Genesis of Pabloism," "Development of the Spartacist League [of New Zealand]," and "The Struggle for Trotskyism in Ceylon"; and the agreements endorsed at the interim international conference held in Germany in January 1974.

8. Both the present "United Secretariat" and the former "International Committee" despite their respective pretensions "to be" the Fourth International, as a necessary condition for their fake "unities," have chronically mocked the principles of internationalism and of Bolshevik democratic centralism as their different national groups or nationally-based factions have gone their own way -- ultimately in response to the pressures of their own ruling classes. Thus until the English and French components of the ex-"International Committee" blew apart, the International Committee operated explicitly on the proposition that "the only method of arriving at decisions that remains possible at present is the principle of unanimity" (decision at the 1966 London International Committee Conference). Since then the Healyites have substituted the naked Gauleiter/Fuhrer principle as their mockery of democratic centralism. The other, OCI-led wing of the ex-IC retained the contradiction of launching the Organizing Committee for Reconstruction of the Fourth International which was supposed to initiate political discussion on the basis of the 1938 Transitional Program, while simultaneously seeking to build new national sections. Both such hypothetical sections and the Organizing Committee itself therefore labored under a basic ambiguity from the outset, but the Organizing Committee's disintegration into sharply

counterposed elements all of whom swear by the 1938 Program has left its practice stillborn. Today, following the just concluded "Tenth Congress" of the United Secretariat, its American supporters, being themselves in the Minority internationally, threaten their own national minority, the Internationalist Tendency (which belongs to the international Majority), by declaring:

"The Socialist Workers Party proclaims its fraternal solidarity with the Fourth International but is prevented by reactionary legislation from affiliating to it. All political activities of members of the SWP are decided upon by the democratically elected national leadership bodies of the



L D Trotsky and V I Lenin at Second Congress of the Third International in 1920.

SWP and by the local and branch units of the party. Unconditional acceptance of the authority of these SWP bodies is a prerequisite of membership. *There are no other bodies whose decisions are binding on the SWP or its members.*" (our emphasis) (SWP *Internal Information Bulletin* #4, April 1974, from Introductory Note, 17 April 1974)

9. This apparently naked assertion of national independence by or toward organizations in the United States is not unique and has a specific history. Thus the American Healyite publicist, Wohlforth, declares in his pamphlet, "Revisionism in Crisis":

"With the passing of the Voorhis Act in 1940 the SWP was barred from membership in the Fourth International by law. Ever since that time the SWP has not been able to be an affiliate of the Fourth International. So today its relationship to the United Secretariat is one of political solidarity just as the Workers' League stands in political solidarity with the International Committee."

The "Voorhis Act" passed by the American Congress in 1940 has been used as a convenient excuse for revisionists to more openly display their concrete anti-internationalism than is convenient for their co-thinkers elsewhere.

This act, while ostensibly aimed centrally at domestic military conspiracies directed by foreign powers, was actually intended, as was the overlapping "Smith Act," to harass the American Communist Party, then supporting the Hitler-Stalin Pact. A key provision states: "An organization is subject to foreign control if ... its policies or any of them are determined by or at the suggestion of ... an international political organization" (political activity being defined as that aimed at the forcible control or overthrow of the government). Such organizations were to be subject to such massive and repetitive "registration" requirements as to paralyze them, quite aside from the impermissible nature of many of the disclosures demanded. Thus it was similar to the later "Communist Control Act" which was successfully fought by the American CP. But the "Voorhis Act" with its patently unconstitutional and contradictory provisions has never been used by the government -- only the revisionists.

10. Today the United Secretariat Majority makes loud cries in favor of *international* unity and discipline i.e., against the SWP's views and con-

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(Wolfgang Hohmann)

an International Trotskyist Tendency

duct, but it was not always so. When the fore-runner of the Spartacist League tried to appeal its expulsion from the SWP to the United Secretariat, Pierre Frank wrote for the United Secretariat on 28 May 1965 that:

"In reply to your letter of May 18 we call your attention first of all to the fact that the Fourth International has no organizational connection with the Socialist Workers party and consequently has no jurisdiction in a problem such as you raise; namely, the application democratic centralism as it affects the organization either as a whole or in individual instances."

After Frank gave the Spartacists his answer, Healy publicly expressed sympathy for the Spartacists' plight, charging in his *Newsletter* of 16 June 1965 that Frank "ducks behind a legal formula for cover." But when Healy's own ox was gored by the SWP's publication of the embarrassing pamphlet "Healy 'Reconstructs' the Fourth International," Healy's SLL threatened violence and/or legal action ("Political Committee Statement," 20 August 1966 *Newsletter*) against any who circulated the pamphlet in his England. Shortly he used both -- the Tate affair! Healy claimed as the basis for his threats the self-same fear of the Voorhis Act on behalf of Wohlforth and the Spartacists. But the *Spartacist* then replied:

"We for our part reject the SLL's solicitude on our behalf. The Voorhis Act is a *paper tiger* -- never used against anyone and patently unconstitutional. For the Justice Department to start proceedings against a small group like ours or the smaller and less threatening [Wohlforthite] ACFI would make the government a laughing stock, and Healy knows this. He is aware that for years the SWP has hidden behind this very act to defend its own federalist idea of an International."

-- *Spartacist* #7, Sept.-Oct. 1966

11. More currently, however, as in the United Secretariat Majority's "Again, and Always, the Question of the International" (by Alain Krivine and the self-same Pierre Frank, 10 June 1971, *SWP International Information Bulletin* #5, July 1971) they attack the public formulation by Jack Barnes, SWP National Secretary, that "the principal condition for international organization" is "collaboration between leaderships ... in every country." To this idea Krivine and Frank counterpose "the International, a world party based on democratic centralism." And later this Majority Tendency (in *IIDB* Volume X, #20, October 1973) notes that the Minority, in flagrant contradiction to Barnes' and Hansen's previously expressed views, declares "we will do our utmost to construct a strong [international] center," and the Majority concludes that "actual practice leaves no doubt: the [Minority] faction would be for a 'strong center' if it were able to have a majority in it." And most recently the same United Secretariat Majority asserts that behind the acts of the SWP-based Minority "lies a federalist conception of the International which contradicts the statutes and the line adopted by the [Tenth] World Congress" (17 March 1974, *IIDB* Volume XI, #5, April 1974). The United Secretariat Majority ought to know. They made this accusation in commenting on a Tenth Congress joint Minority-Majority agreement so flagrant in mutually amnestying every sort of indiscipline, public attack and disavowal, organizational chicanery, walkout and expulsion that the Majority also had to offer the feeble disclaimer that these "compromises adopted at this World Congress should in no way be taken as precedents" and that "the exceptional character of these measures is demonstrated, moreover, by the unanimous adoption of our new statutes" (which formally contradict the real practice!). Yes indeed, for opportunists and revisionists basic organizational principles are not of centralized, comradesly, even-handed and consistent practice but just boil down to the simple matter of whose ox is gored. This is the organizational aspect of Pabloism.

If today the United Secretariat promises to back up its own friends in the SWP should action be taken against them, the point to be made is not the United Secretariat's dishonesty and hypocrisy per se, but rather the shattering of the United Secretariat's pretensions (like those of the International Committee) to be the Fourth International. They both trim their avowed organizational principles through expediency for petty advantage just as and because they do the same with their political principles and program.

12. The international Spartacist tendency is just that, a tendency in the process of consolidation. But from its international outset it declares its continuing fidelity already tested for a decade in national confines to Marxist-Lenin-

ist principle and Trotskyist program -- Revolutionary, Internationalist and Proletarian.

The struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International promises to be difficult, long, and, above all, uneven. But it is an indispensable and central task facing those who would win proletarian power and thus open the road to the achievement of socialism for humanity. The struggle begun by L.D. Trotsky in 1929 to constitute an International Left Opposition must be studied. Both despite and because of the differing objective and subjective particulars and with ultimately common basis then and now there is much to be learned especially as to the testing and selection of cadres in the course of the vicissitudes of social and internal struggles.

The giant figure of Trotsky attracted around itself all sorts of personally and programmatically unstable elements repelled by the degenerating Comintern. This led, together with demoralization from the succession of working-class defeats culminating in the second World War, to a prolonged and not always successful sorting out process. It is a small compensation for the lack of a Trotsky that the Spartacist tendency has little extraneous, symbolic drawing power at the outset. But a decade of largely localized experience shows no lack of weak or accidental elements drawn temporarily to the tendency. The

only real test is in hard-driving, all-sided involvement in living class struggle.

As L.D. Trotsky noted in "At the Fresh Grave of Kote Tsintsadze," 7 January 1931:

"It took altogether extraordinary conditions like czarism, illegality, prison, and deportation, many years of struggle against the Mensheviks, and especially the experience of three revolutions to produce fighters like Kote Tsintsadze ..."

"The Communist parties in the West have not yet brought up fighters of Tsintsadze's type. This is their besetting weakness, determined by historical reasons but nonetheless a weakness. The Left Opposition in the Western countries is not an exception in this respect and it must well take note of it."

Central Committee, SL/ANZ

Central Committee, SL/U.S.

[this draft agreed to by the Political Bureau, SLUS and representative of the Central Committee SLANZ, 22 May 1974; accepted by the CC, SLANZ, 7 June 1974; declared to be in force, following concurrence with it at the European Summer Camp of the International Spartacist Tendency, 6 July 1974.] ■

Toward the rebirth of the Fourth International!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

NZ strike wave . . .

involved in the stoppages -- an exceptional occurrence in NZ, where labour relations have been relatively peaceful since the 1951 Waterfront strike.

Trying to end the movement threatening to escape their control, union officials arranged a gross capitulation on the issue of state strike-breaking in order to get Andersen released fast. On July 3 Tom Skinner, President of the FOL, visited Andersen in the Mt Eden jail together with the Minister of Labour, Hugh Watt, and obtained his approval for a proposal to lift the Drivers' ban, to withdraw the writ for contempt of Court, and to open negotiations for government purchase of the ferry service. Andersen tried to hide his surrender by channeling the issue into the bourgeois Parliament for legislative action. He told the crowd of 10,000 who greeted him outside the court "We feel that as a result of the action the chances of the law being amended are very good" (*Evening Post*, 3 July 1974).

Not only was the idea that Parliament would stop the injunctions laughable, but the Kirk government quickly moved to *expand* the legal powers of the state to intervene against strikes (including special legislation against marine and power engineers, and harbour pilots), justified with virulent anti-union rhetoric. However, the militant Seamen's Union announced that it would not return to work "until an assurance is given by the Government that urgent action will be taken to amend the legislation providing for injunctions against trade unions". No such assurance was forthcoming. Instead, Kirk used the Andersen sellout to justify opposing the strike, declaring that his release closed the matter and that therefore all industrial action should cease.

Clearly, the motions passed at both the FOL and the LP Annual Conferences in May calling for legislation to eliminate the use of legal injunctions during industrial disputes are absolutely meaningless -- except to the Socialist Action League (SAL) (NZ co-thinkers of the Socialist Workers League in Australia). Applauding the FOL bureaucracy for sponsoring the important motions against the resistance of the Labour parliamentarians, they then said:

"If the entire union movement got behind the drivers and seamen for a massive and united march on parliament, perhaps we would then see some government action against Court injunctions..." (*Socialist Action*, 28 June 1974)

The SAL in its usual haste to pressure the Labour Government to the left ignores the vital need to smash the *whole* Industrial Relations Act, of which the court injunctions are only one part. Wedded to their petty-bourgeois reform movements, they abstain from building *any* kind of alternative leadership in the unions, much less the revolutionary caucuses based on the transitional program needed to counter the present union misleadership.

On July 4, Kirk stated:

"The public have had a gutsfull and so have we ... the government has a number of powers available to it to deal with stoppages but it would prefer not to use them if possible. However, the public interest comes first." (*Evening Post*, 4 July 1974).

Kirk is counting on the Skinners and Andersens to help discipline the workers so that he can avoid as much as possible the onus of open state strikebreaking that exposes his true nature. The powers at his disposal were declaration of a state of local emergency and deregistration, but he prefers to obtain the bureaucrats' cooperation with threats. Thus, to end a prolonged stopwork meeting by the Canterbury branch of the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR), he declared the branch would be deregistered unless it returned to work immediately. This brought NUR National Secretary Collins flying to Christchurch to get the branch back to work.

None of the established New Zealand left-wing groups offered any real alternative to Kirk and Skinner. The SUP's Andersen actively participated in the betrayals. Most "revolutionary" in its rhetoric was the Maoist Communist Party of New Zealand (CPNZ). Their *People's Voice* headline of 10 July, "Truly Magnificent Mass Struggle!", epitomises the CPNZ's blind enthusing over spontaneous rank-and-file militancy. While *People's Voice* makes some correct criticisms of the SUP and NZLP reformists it offers no alternative, just empty rhetoric about how workers will succeed "... armed with the awareness, organisation and leadership of a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary party ...". Fine words -- but what *program* does the CPNZ propose to organise the class and split it from its class-collaborationist leadership? The CPNZ calls for unity with the national bourgeoisie for the "first stage" revolution "against imperialism" -- tying workers to their class enemy. This "anti-imperialist" class collaboration (aside from being ridiculous in a country like New Zealand) leads just as surely to reformism as that of Andersen and Skinner.

The Labour Government has shown repeatedly where its real sympathy lies -- maintaining capitalism. What is needed is a real workers government, based not on the bourgeois parliament but on working-class organisations, and pledged to expropriate the capitalist class. The SAL, CPNZ and SUP have all revealed their inherent incapacity to lead the class anywhere but into the arms of the labour traitors. Their misleadership must be demonstrated to the working class in order to build a workers party with the program of revolutionary Trotskyism, the only consistently revolutionary program, in New Zealand.

Smash the Industrial Relations Act!

Smash the wage freeze! For an automatic cost-of-living escalator!

For the nationalisation of Industry -- *without compensation and under workers' control!*

Oust Kirk -- for a Labour Party with a revolutionary leadership! ■

metal industry . . .

tried to blame on "computer trouble". A similar meeting last April had close to 1000 shops represented.

The July 15 meeting passed a motion demanding a "satisfactory" response from the employers by July 22, the date of the first meeting between the unions and the employers. But no action was proposed, and the July 22 meeting has come and gone with a categorical refusal from the Metal Trades Industry Association (MTIA) (the chief employer group) and still no sign of any action. *It is clear that the metal union leaders still have no intention of fighting even for the \$15.*

The MTIA's answer to the union complained about competition from imports in the wake of the Labor Government's import tariff cuts and threatened to move production out of Australia to exploit low wages in more backward countries:

"A cross-section of those firms surveyed revealed that studies have been made of the products manufactured, that certain items have been dropped from production....

"Others were actively engaged in assessing the advantages of investment in Asian countries with a view to taking advantage of low wage scales and incentive schemes offering in those countries...." (quoted in *Financial Review*, 23 July 1974)

Undoubtedly, the MTIA's whinging is partly based on a reality of the declining profit outlook. But they are demanding that metal workers help maintain their profits by accepting a cut in real wages and by pressuring the Labor Government to keep the tariffs. In reality, workers would gain nothing by this class collaboration; in the context of a growing world recession, unemployment will grow with or without the tariffs.

Implicit in the MTIA's proposition is an insidious appeal to a form of national chauvinism which has been a traditional part of the false consciousness fostered by the trade-union bureaucracy in Australia: protectionism. Most virulent purveyors of this poison have been people like VBEF Secretary Wilson who has threatened a strike in protest against proposed reductions in car import tariffs, recently recommended by the Federal Government's Industrial Assistance Commission (IAC), claiming car workers need to support the profits of the car monopolies

in order to prevent layoffs. Union officials in the textile industry, in which about 3500 have been sacked since Whitlam cut textile tariffs by 25% last year, likewise have joined hands with the bosses to appeal to the government for their restoration. These bureaucrats are promoting chauvinist fears in Australian workers of "cheap foreign labour" stealing "Australian jobs", and demand that foreign workers be damned in order to save Australian capitalists. National chauvinism is the inevitable product of protectionism; it must be completely opposed.

Whitlam's idea that tariff cuts, encouraging competition from abroad, will lower prices and promote efficiency by forcing Australian capitalists to compete is also false. Imported textile goods have been retailing for about the same price as locally produced goods, and allegations have been made of profit margins exceeding 300% (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 July 1974). The imports are replacing locally produced goods not only by competing on the market place, but by offering more attractive profits. No wonder employers in the metal industry are thinking of putting their capital either in factories overseas or directly into the importing business. Whitlam's plan is just an indirect way of "fighting inflation" by encouraging unemployment.

The workers at the Elizabeth, South Australia General Motors-Holden assembly plant showed both a fighting spirit and elementary good sense when, spurning the protectionist demagoguery of Wilson and VBEF Assistant Secretary Townsend, at a meeting of 500 called by the Combined Shop Committee a resolution was passed declaring that sackings would be fought by class-struggle means including work-ins, and demanding a 32 hour, four-day week at 40 hours pay in order to provide continued work for all employees in the event of any cutbacks. The meeting also "called on the Federal government to introduce legislation to guarantee a job to everyone willing to work and to abolish the right of employers to hire and fire" (*Tribune*, 16 July 1974). Such a demand both represents and promotes illusions among workers that the *bourgeois* state is capable of doing anything remotely similar; full employment could not be guaranteed by parliamentary legislation but only by a *workers* state. The only effective immediate action to maintain employment short of the expropriation of the employers is class action, such as *union* control of hiring and firing. The CPA's *Tribune* did not

adherents assert that the ALP is not a workers' party at all. The "Adelaide document" declares that "the ALP is a capitalist party". Nevertheless, it calls for keeping the ALP in power:

"For purposes[sic] there are good reasons for keeping the ALP in power while there is no alternative other than a more right wing regime."

If the Adelaide grouping believes the ALP to be a bourgeois party, then regardless of how much support it has in the working class, to support it as a lesser evil reveals the class-collaborationist appetite lurking behind their formal ultraleftism. The Adelaide grouping simply cannot comprehend that the ALP embodies an internal contradiction -- a workers party directly based on the trade unions and historically the party of the working class as a *class*, but with a bourgeois program and treacherous reformist leadership.

The denial that the ALP is a workers party at all, like Aarons' less categorical "negative attitude" towards it, is a convenient excuse to avoid a real struggle against ALP hegemony in the working class. Such abstentionism is linked to a reformist syndicalism which the Adelaide grouping has in common with the Aaronsites: promoting the ALP -- capitalist or no -- as a "lesser evil" in parliament; and tailing and glorifying rank-and-file trade-union militancy at the same time as CPA union officials routinely sell out that militancy. Aarons uses the Adelaide grouping as a left cover while as usual tailing the ALP "lefts" and the labour bureaucracy.

Jack Munday -- popular leader of the NSW Builders' Labourers' syndicalist, reformist-utopian green bans -- has come to express the extreme strain of petty-bourgeois "Aaronsism", with his reactionary brand of environmentalism, and who has publicly compared the USSR to capitalism, suggesting a refusal to defend it against imperialism. By electing Munday its new National President at the 24th Congress, the CPA capped the defeat of Taft and Senny and emphatically confirmed the CPA's present course. ■

While giving no *political* support to the nationalist Campaign Against Foreign Military Bases in Australia, the SLANZ calls for the *unconditional* defence of the fifty-one arrested in its "Long March" actions at Exmouth in June. Solidarity against such attacks by the bourgeois state is a fundamental *principle* of the workers movement. We demand that all charges be dropped.

criticise this, "forgetting" their rhetoric about workers' control.

In stark contrast to the response of the Elizabeth GMH workers was the reaction of the MTF tops to the MTIA's attempts at protectionist seduction. Devereux's statements following the meeting with the MTIA are a clear warning of the impending sellout:

"Mr. Devereux said the unions took the view that the workers in the industry could not



Typical fake-left bureaucrat -- AMWU Victorian Secretary and CPA member, John Halfpenny.

be expected to be the *only ones* to make sacrifices to improve the economic prospects of the industry. He said the unions would discuss the employers' document and would confer again with the MTIA on August 12. If any areas of agreement were reached, the unions would be prepared to consider making approaches to the Government, either jointly or separately." (*Financial Review*, 23 July 1974) (emphasis added)

Significantly, the MTF has put off the next meeting with the employers until August 12, *after* the 7 August Arbitration Commission meeting to consider the wage indexation schemes of Minister for Labour Clyde Cameron. Cameron's plan is a deliberate fraud, with only *quarterly* adjustments to the *minimum* wage, *designed* to allow wages to fall behind prices and tying wages to productivity. Devereux and company hope that they can use the hearings as a justification for selling out on wages. Since the plan obtained Cabinet's approval on July 29, they will turn the wage campaign into a campaign to pressure the Commission into supporting this sweetheart deal. While even an inadequate cost-of-living adjustment is better than none, it would be criminal to abandon the struggle in exchange, and the unions must not accept any conditions or "understandings" attached to it. Fake lefts like Carmichael and Halfpenny are thoroughly implicated in the backhanded support to protectionism and the plans for a sell-out.

At the July 15 delegates' meeting in Sydney, it became clear that a great deal of the pressure within the AMWU and the other metal unions to reopen the award comes from tradesmen angry over the loss of wage relativities for skilled workers, resulting partly from the higher award rates other unions have obtained, and partly from the flat wage rises (as opposed to percentage increases) negotiated in the last two metal awards.

In an apparent policy change the recent AMWU Commonwealth Congress endorsed a system of "broadbanding" to fix permanently skill margins for tradesmen at 22% to 34% above process workers pay (*Amalgamated News*, June 1974).

The relative wage difference between skilled and unskilled workers is a product of the capitalist labour market, where skilled labour has a higher exchange value because there is a social investment in producing the skill. It has been perpetuated by craft unionism, which confines its perspectives to improving the bargaining position of workers in selling their labour power to the employers. Within the perspective of capitalism, the trade-union consciousness represented in tradesmen's concern for relativities *per se* is highly divisive to the proletariat, entailing a defence of the (very minor) privileges of tradesmen at the sacrifice of less skilled workers. It is *equally* wrong to press for wage equalisation at the expense of wage gains for tradesmen, and under capitalism labour market conditions will always favour higher wages for tradesmen. But to *consciously aim* to maintain the established ratio of skilled to unskilled wages, as the AMWU bureaucrats do, is to support reactionary craft prejudices among tradesmen, and means that wage rises for process workers will be limited by the

CONTINUED FROM PAGE EIGHT

"Independent" reformism . . .

failure of imperialist intervention, and the fact that *the proletariat in these countries was not a direct contender for state power* both enabled and compelled the petty-bourgeois leaders of mass peasant revolts to seize control; and in order to maintain themselves in power, to expropriate the bourgeoisie. The results were workers states deformed from inception by the same type of bureaucratic caste produced by the degeneration of the October Revolution. These nationalist, bonapartist regimes are necessarily opposed to the international expansion of proletarian revolution and are compelled to suppress workers democracy.

The CPA could care less about the betrayals of these Stalinists. Thus there was uniform acclaim at the CPA Congress for the delegation from the Stalinist Vietnamese Workers Party which attended -- the same party which murdered the Trotskyist leadership of the Saigon proletariat in 1945, because the Trotskyists opposed the re-entry of imperialist troops whom Ho Chi Minh advised the Vietnamese masses to welcome!

There are three sides to the dispute in the CPA over the ALP. The position of Aarons, coinciding with that of the 1972 policy statement *Left Challenge for the 70s*, involves a "strategy" of "fighting reformist ideas"; cooperating with and "encouraging" any "left forces" in the ALP; and supporting the "progressive measures" of the Labor Government so as to gently nudge Whitlam to the left. The Senny/Taft tendency urges a "more positive" attitude toward those "progressive measures" -- that is, Whitlam's piddling reforms -- and wants to keep the "fight against reformist ideas" within tight limits so that "negative attitudes" do not hinder the CPA's ability to "have an effect" on Whitlam, Cairns and the other ALP tops.

These differences are obviously not fundamental. But the Adelaide grouping, which blocked with Aarons against Taft and Senny, and its

Defend the fifty-one!

Contributions to aid in the defence of the fifty-one are being solicited by the Long March Defence Committee. All contributions should be sent to:

Rosanne Conroy, Treasurer,
Long March Defence Committee,
Box 4003, Mail Exchange,
Melbourne, Victoria, 3001.

reformists. The result is that both tradesmen and process workers suffer. Wage goals must be decided by what wage is adequate and necessary for *all* workers.

A clear example of the divisive results of craft consciousness is the strike in May at Elizabeth GMH by electricians organised in the Electrical Trades Union (ETU). This strike was organised so as to exclude other workers from the struggle (with the connivance of officials of all unions represented in the plant) and explicitly aimed at maintaining relativities following the flat increases which had just been granted to all car workers.

Tribune (4 June 1974) condemned the strikers, implicitly endorsing the criminal attempts by officials of other unions, especially the VBEF, and the ETU itself, as well as ACTU head Bob Hawke, to smash the strike or cooperate in GMH threats to use scab labour. But while defending the strike against the company was absolutely necessary, the motivation for it had to be opposed. The electricians were misled by their own union officials who *promote* craft consciousness, and then betrayed by them, giving GMH a tool to divide the workforce in the plant.

The obverse error to the CPA's demagogic apologetics was made by the economist Healyites of the Socialist Labour League (SLL) who capitulated to craft unionism by endorsing strikes to protect relativities. *Workers News* (6 June 1974) stated categorically: "The origins of the dispute, was an attempt to maintain relativity margins between electricians and production line workers." But the following week in an attack on the *Tribune* article, *Workers News* declared this was just another form of wages struggle, trying to hide the relativities issue. This is part of a general pattern on the part of the SLL, which capitulates to backward consciousness by ignoring special oppression of women or migrant workers, who are concentrated in unskilled production line jobs.

Although the economic slump in Australia has not yet reached very great proportions, the basis has already been laid for a recession at least as bad as 1971-72 and possibly much worse than 1961. After reaching a low in April, when job vacancies almost everywhere exceeded registered unemployed, by the end of June the situation had reversed and growing unemployment clearly established: unemployed rose in June to 80,000 while vacancies dropped to 63,000. Although profits have remained high for some companies, the anticipated rate of profit has fallen below capitalists' expectations, leading them to drastically curtail the ambitious capital investment programs they enthusiastically projected in March and April at the height of the transitory boom, and to start layoffs and plant closures.

While there are several reasons for this, the much-publicised credit squeeze and import flood are only secondary and derivative. The major reason is the developing international recession in the face of the long-term tendency for the rate of profit to fall, which caught up with imperialist capitalism decisively in 1971 and the resulting increase in inter-imperialist economic competition, following the fall of the US from the position of absolute dominance over the other imperialist powers. Australian industry has

stagnated technologically due to domination by monopolies and protectionist tariff walls, and is highly dependent on export raw materials markets and trade with the large imperialist powers. Developments in these countries, most directly Japan but also the US and Britain, inevitably determine the outlook for the Australian economy.

In Japan, Australia's biggest customer and third largest supplier, capital investment is projected to show zero real growth in 1974 and output during the January-March period registered a *fall* in real terms -- the biggest fall in real growth since 1955 (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 1 April and 17 June 1974). Personal consumption and housebuilding are down. The recent 20% rise in Australian ore and coal prices agreed to by Japanese capitalists will not help if there is a cutback in the key Japanese steel industry they supply. In the US, things are not much better, with high unemployment and inflation continuing to rise. Stock market indices are declining worldwide as more capitalists take their wealth out of capital stock to hold in other forms. Such stock market slumps are normal before recessions.

In Australia, businesses face a shortage of credit and declining orders, leading to a series of shutdowns and retrenchments, especially in the meat processing, textile and electronics industries. The spectacular sacking of 1000 workers at Leyland Australia's large car assembly plant in Sydney was due to the weak state of that company, but it is symptomatic of a car industry highly vulnerable to competition from Japanese manufacturers, which *in spite of* tariffs have practically doubled their share of the Australian market in the past two or three years. And the car import tariffs are now likely to be reduced.

INFLATION SPAWNS LABOR CABINET CONFUSION

Inflation, however spectacular, is not the *cause* of the current world crisis but a *reflection* of it. There are two objective bases for the general international inflationary trend. One is the inability of the nationally organised ruling classes, in the absence of the external discipline of the gold standard, to control the international money supply. To do so would require a genuinely international political unit which the bourgeoisie cannot provide, because it is completely tied to the historically obsolete nation-states on which the rule of the various national capitalist classes rests. Secondly, the capitalists in the advanced capitalist world -- including Australia and New Zealand -- are unwilling to risk the social turmoil which would be necessary to confront the strong trade unions which have become entrenched in the bourgeois democracies. This confrontation would be necessary to drive down wages by replacing organised workers with the unemployed, and would mean destroying the apparatus of the trade-union bureaucrats who have so faithfully sabotaged workers' use of the unions' power. Hence capitalists have resorted to raising prices to compensate for wage increases when the profit margins have become too tight -- a policy made possible by the ability of monopolies to control the market. But growing inflation worries the bourgeoisie, as it is both a barometer and a source of general instability.

There are really only two options open to

opposition against national oppression, but any kind of nationalism is reactionary because it hides the cutting line between the classes, between the oppressors and the oppressed. Any kind of support for Arab nationalism is simply supporting the oppression of the Arab masses by their rulers.

The conclusions of the theory of permanent revolution are completely clear in the Near East. There is no national solution under capitalism; a truly democratic solution for the national oppression, not only of the Palestinians but of the Kurds and the blacks in south Sudan, is possible only under a victorious proletarian revolution. The struggle against national oppression must lead to a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Any other approach, in the name of any kind of "tactics," is no more than a barrier to the revolutionary path of the international working class.

DOWN WITH REACTIONARY ZIONIST AND ARAB NATIONALISM!

FOR THE MULTI-NATIONAL BOLSHEVIK PARTY OF THE NEAR EAST!

FOR THE REBIRTH OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL!

FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION THROUGH THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION!

FOR THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE PALESTINIAN ARAB NATION AND THE JEWISH HEBREW-SPEAKING NATION!

FOR A BI-NATIONAL WORKERS STATE IN PALESTINE!

FOR A MULTI-NATIONAL SOCIALIST FEDERATION OF THE NEAR EAST! ■

the Australian ruling class: to allow unemployment to increase, or generate further unemployment in order to use it as a lever against the trade unions; or to try to bolster profit rates by instituting a wage freeze -- either state-enforced or a "voluntary" freeze enforced by the union bureaucracy.

The crisis has produced confusion in the Whitlam government and divisions within the Cabinet which reflect the different ruling-class options. No one in the Labor Government including fake-lefts like Cairns and Cameron is proposing anything *other* than an attack on wages or jobs. Crean wants the credit squeeze to artificially accelerate unemployment. This amounts to a desire for a "controlled" recession, which would stop the strike wave and inflict a defeat on the unions. Cameron, with his wage indexation scheme, wants a disguised wage freeze, supervised by the bourgeois state through the Arbitration system but enforced by the trade-union bureaucracy. The problem is the strike wave has partially escaped the bureaucrats' control -- witness the inability of the Federal officials of the Postal Workers union to force the NSW branch to call off their strikes in June. Cameron's plan is not on as far as the bourgeoisie is concerned simply because they doubt that the union officials can deliver on Cameron's promises. Snedden, reflecting this capitalist consensus, wants a wage freeze but opposes wage indexation, and not only Liberals but some Labor MPs have begun to talk about "strengthening the Arbitration system" -- a euphemism for preparing to use the penal powers. It is left to Hawke to try to simultaneously support Whitlam (who backs Crean's plan), while mollifying the left-wing bureaucrats and deceiving the workers by pretending to oppose unemployment; and to back Cameron's plan while avoiding any *open* commitment to hold down wages! In a repeat performance of the prices and incomes referendum, Hawke, backed by Stalinist union official Pat Clancy (*The Australian*, 27 June 1974) is demanding fake price controls as the only measure which will give them the credibility they need to impose wage restraint on a rebellious rank and file.

In this situation the danger arises that the union officials and ALP parliamentarians who are more "radical" in their rhetoric and are therefore in a better position to betray will take over, re-cementing the ties of the proletariat to reformism loosened by the exposure of the current crop. Hawke expressed his concern for his left flank when he warned that "the Government was moving to a situation where confidence in it was becoming a little tarnished" (*The Australian*, 9 July 1974). It may be possible for the less "tarnished" left reformists of the CPA variety to head off a mass upsurge.

Beside the left reformists and their tails (such as the Socialist Workers League) stand those who believe that the escalating struggle of the masses is enough of itself to make workers conscious of their class interests, of the need to overthrow capitalism. These syndicalists range from the anarchist end of the political spectrum (Brian Laver's Self Management group) to elements in the CPA, and include the pseudo-Trotskyist Communist League and the Melbourne Socialist Workers Action Group. Because they ignore the absolutely crucial importance of political leadership, or because they wish to avoid conflict with the reformists, they see "rank-and-file initiative" and "unity" as a panacea. The *program* that they offer is therefore always limited by the current level of mass consciousness and struggle -- and that is still confined within the limits of bourgeois society. Whatever their "revolutionary" delusions, objectively they can only prop up the left reformists.

Any leadership is based on the program it presents and fights for; a revolutionary leadership is one that consistently promotes a *transitional* program to link the on-going class struggle to the struggle for state power, enabling it to expose the dangers of class collaboration. Unless the social-traitors are opposed in the unions and other workers' organisations by an alternative leadership, based on the *full* transitional program of Trotsky, which acts as an extension of the Leninist vanguard party, the death agony of capitalism will yield not the revolutionary regeneration of society but its regression to barbarism. ■

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

Israeli Trotskyists . . .

the same equal rights exist in the same geographical territory. Any denial of the equal rights of the two nations only aids the spread of the nationalist poison.

Socialists must call for a bi-national workers state as part of a multi-national socialist federation of the Near East. But we cannot force this solution. The Arab and Jewish masses must be convinced that this is the correct answer. And although Leninists must argue that a solution of two separate *workers* states would be foolish and even reactionary, in the case that the masses choose a solution of two different workers states we would support this as well. It is clear that in such a situation the Jewish workers state would be smaller than the present Zionist Israeli state.

At the same time Jewish workers have a special responsibility, since their ruling class is responsible for the oppression of the Palestinian masses, to demonstrate solidarity with their Palestinian brothers through a political struggle against the reign of colonialism, racialism, religious nationalism and territorial expansion. Any kind of economist approach which avoids this struggle is the best help that socialists can give to the Zionists or Arab nationalism.

We must struggle against Arab nationalism to the same extent as against Zionist nationalism. As Leninists we understand that the nationalism of the Palestinians is a deformed expression of

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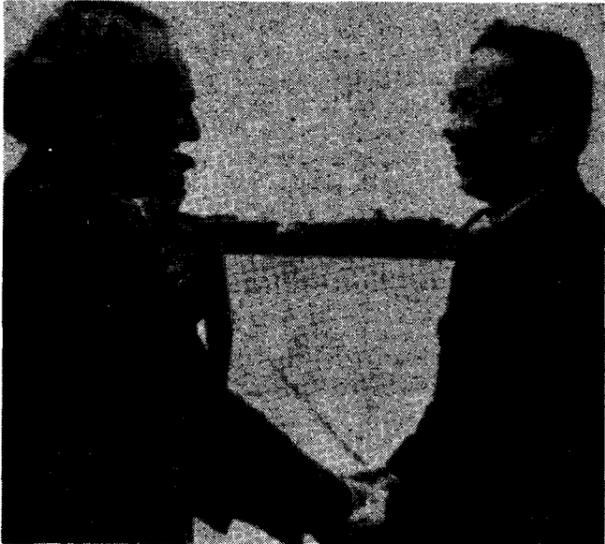
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CPA Congress: confusion remains, but she'll be right . . .

"Independent" reformist course confirmed

The 24th Congress of the Communist Party of Australia which concluded on June 17, produced no surprises. The Congress upheld the "independent" reformism of the Laurie Aarons leadership, consolidating the CPA's practice since the 1971 split with the pro-Moscow Stalinists now in the Socialist Party of Australia (SPA). In doing this, the CPA took a further step in its attempt to build a party of left-wing reformism on the basis of repudiation of its historic political ties with the Kremlin bureaucracy (see *ASp* no 9, "De-Stalinised reformism decomposes")

But the Congress could not settle the disputes within the party caused by differences over how to carry out that task, and remains without a



Laurie Aarons (left) with Vietnamese Stalinist Le Duan in Hanoi in April. (photo: *Tribune*)

stable orientation or ideology. A look at the decisions of the Congress and the disputes throws some light on the confusion, appetites and potential for class treachery of this important enemy of revolutionary Marxism in Australia.

The CPA Congress was animated by the factional struggle which broke out sharply last November between Aarons and the grouping centred in Victoria around former national president John Sedy and National Committee member Bernie Taft. While not fundamental, the division between the Sedy/Taft bloc and Aarons is real. Sedy and Taft want to conciliate Stalinism -- both the SPA and the Kremlin -- in order to better pursue "independent reformism". At the other extreme is the tendency to reject entirely -- for the same basic aim -- not only the Soviet bureaucracy but the defence of the Soviet workers state. While not at this extreme, Aarons has backed the path of "bolder independence". The different tendencies reflect different specific appetites.

Sedy and Taft would like a party on the model of the Communist party of Italy (CPI); but the CPA is not a mass working-class party with a solid base in the trade-union bureaucracy like the CPI, and its turn has meant a growing petty-bourgeois composition and consequent strengthening of petty-bourgeois ideologies. The CPA does not have the social weight to negotiate from a position of strength either with the Kremlin or with the bourgeoisie. The logic of the CPA's break with Moscow in order to pursue middle-class respectability makes a further development of "bolder independence" inevitable.

Aarons, in his "keynote address" to the delegates and the bourgeois press at the open commencement session (from which observers from the Spartacist League, the SPA, and the Socialist Labour League were excluded) defined the central conflict as follows:

"Can this [fundamental social transformation] be conceived as coming through such a sharpening of capitalism's total crisis -- economic, social, moral, political -- that will lead to revolutionary upsurge and ultimately a revolution -- any situation in which the working class and its allies directly confront and challenge the totality of capitalist power; ideologic hegemony, economic control, its coercive power -- the State and its auxiliaries?"

"Or is there no such possibility, leading to a different strategic orientation based on a gradualist perspective which moves by stages through anti-monopoly and democratic tasks in which an overwhelming popular majority is created around radical reforms introduced by a left government backed by workers' and popular action; then moving forward to a socialist transformation?"

"The draft Political Resolution [the Aarons-majority document] is based on the first perspective ..."

Aarons means to attribute the second schema (quite accurately) to John Sedy and Bernie Taft. But precisely this schema is the established position of the CPA in its 1970 Congress documents which Aarons too still claims to support, and even claims to base himself on; for instance, the 1970 *Charter of Democratic Rights* outlines quite explicitly this "gradualist perspective":

"Deep recurring social and political crises compel active people's struggle against the system that causes them. These are the conditions for social revolution. If the people's movement is massive and determined enough, it should be possible to isolate the ruling class and carry through a socialist revolution without civil war." (emphasis added)

Aarons claims -- and the practice of the CPA under his control demonstrates -- that he is simply continuing and "developing" the course outlined in 1970. In fact his "first perspective" is so much empty verbal camouflage, and the Taft/Sedy vs Aarons differences concern only the tactics of implementing the same perspective.

The two central issues on which the debate in the CPA really centres, are its attitudes toward the ALP and the Soviet Union. Incapable of a revolutionary analysis of Stalinism, the CPA finds that its break with Moscow has left a gaping ideological hole, and has created enormous practical problems for the CPA leadership's attempts to maintain for opportunist reasons loose ties with Stalinist parties overseas. The search for a niche as a reformist party in Australia in independence from Moscow has produced conflicting appetites -- on the one hand, to have a greater influence within the ALP and on the other hand, to compete directly with the ALP with the ambition of replacing it as the mass reformist party of the working class in Australia.

For three years the CPA has been promising to "develop" an "understanding" of the Soviet Union; and it still hasn't made it. The best it has produced is the deliberately vague and equivocal formula that the USSR, China, the Eastern European states, etc are "socialist-based" as opposed to completely socialist. But no one seems to know what this means, except that the current crop of Kremlin bureaucrats indulge in certain evil practices. Eric Aarons, in a pre-Congress CPA discussion document, attempted to develop a new rationale for criticising the Soviet bureaucrats without drawing any revolutionary conclusions. He explains that the USSR is not "socialist" because of the lack of democracy and grass-roots "self-management", and by

defining property relations under socialism in terms of the form of the workers state:

"... Where public ownership exists and private does not, the problem of the actual exercise by 'the public' of this ownership is crucial, and indeed enters into the very definition or concept of social ownership." (*The Nature of Soviet Society Today*, p 7) (emphasis in original)

But (contrary to the teachings of the CPA's Stalinist heritage) socialism in Marxist terminology is *classless society*, when the bourgeoisie has (internationally) been decisively defeated and so there is no longer a need for a repressive state apparatus. Thus a precondition for socialism is the withering away of the state as an organ of class rule. He totally ignores the key point: the USSR is a workers state (with the job of protecting working-class property from the bourgeoisie); it is therefore not socialist but transitional. Still existing in a predominantly capitalist world, it is a workers state deformed by a parasitic caste which has usurped political power and controls the state in Bonapartist fashion, having destroyed organs of workers' democracy, genuine Soviets, but bases itself on the collectivised property relations which were the great historic conquest of the October Revolution. Eric Aarons' document assumes the permanency of the bureaucracy and its immunity from the world revolution (a fundamental acceptance of the Stalinist "theory" of "socialism in one country"), and with no perspective for overthrowing it and no understanding of why it exists (denying in fact the relevance of its historical development to an analysis of its character!), he ends up in mere apologetics for Brezhnev and company.

An example of the absurdities to which Aarons is reduced is his assertion that, in the absence of "democratic self-management" (which he denies exists at all in the USSR),

"socialist relations of production actually embodying social ownership cannot be said to prevail, even though private ownership has been done away with." (*Soviet Society*, p 4) (emphasis in original)

Capitalist property relations have been smashed, says Aarons, to be replaced by something other than "social ownership". If Aarons were logical, he would have invented a new kind of political economy and therefore a new kind of class society. This, of course, would be a fundamental revision of Marxism, but at least more meaningful



CPA NC member Bernie Taft -- wants to conciliate Stalinism to better pursue "independent" reformism. (photo: *Tribune*)

than Aarons' gibberish about "social ownership" in the Soviet Union after denying the theoretical possibility of its existence there!

As for Sedy and Taft, they oppose the "socialist-based" formula purely on grounds of diplomatic expedience. The Stalinist bureaucrats want to call their countries socialist, so why offend them by making a big deal of it?

The supporters of *Intervention* and the "Adelaide document" (see "De-Stalinised reformism decomposes", *ASp* no 9, for an analysis of this tendency) mostly put forward a view of the USSR which might seem similar to the Marxist analysis of Trotsky. But their call for political revolution in the deformed workers states is rendered meaningless by their opposition to the formation of the Fourth International historically and to the construction of any real International today, any world party armed with the consciousness of Marxism. Only sections of the rebuilt Fourth International in the deformed workers states can successfully lead the political overthrow of the Brezhnevs and Maos, Titos and Castros, restoring workers democracy while preserving and defending the collectivised property in those countries. And the only real defence of these gains is a successful revolution in the capitalist countries -- which only the Fourth International can lead.

The Aarons leadership feels an instinctive attraction to the Stalinist bureaucrats in such countries as Yugoslavia, North Vietnam, Cuba and even China, who had from the start a certain independence from the Kremlin. In those countries a temporary paralysis of bourgeois rule, the

Continued on page six

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